

MARVEL

032

**AARON
LARROCA
DELGADO**

STAR WARS



**STAR WARS
SCREAMING
CITADEL
PART 4 OF 5**

THE SCREAMING CITADEL

Part IV

It is a time of turmoil in the galaxy. While the evil Galactic Empire remains strong, the forces of the Rebel Alliance fight for freedom from their oppressive grasp, establishing a secret outpost deep in the Outer Rim.

Young rebel pilot Luke Skywalker, struggling to find his destiny, accepts an offer to accompany rogue archaeologist Aphra to the Citadel of Ktath'atn—the Screaming Citadel—in an effort to impress the Queen, who will be able to activate an artifact with the consciousness of an ancient Jedi inside.

Luke and Aphra discover that the Queen intends to capture them when rebels Princess Leia, Han Solo, and Sana Starros arrive to coordinate an escape. While Luke and Han quickly fall under the Queen's mesmerizing stare, the others prepare to battle their way out....

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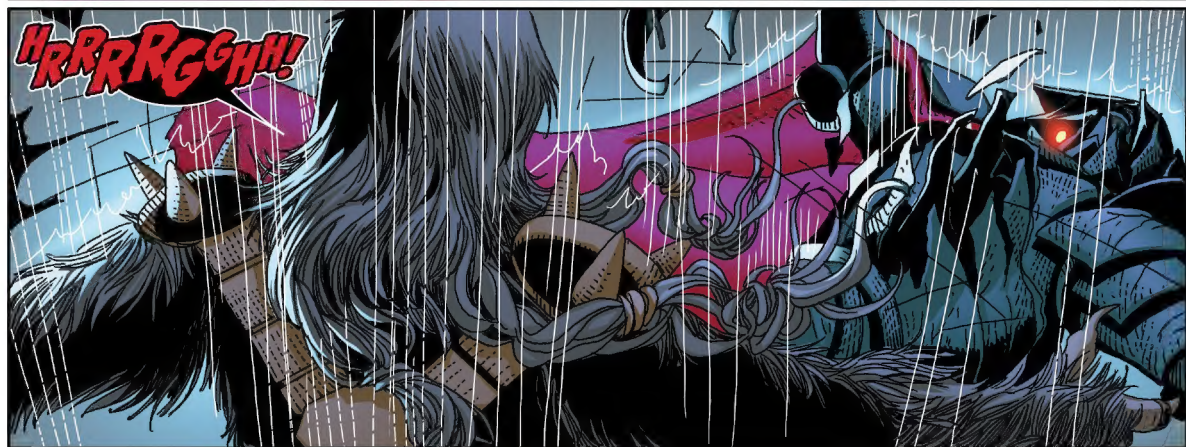
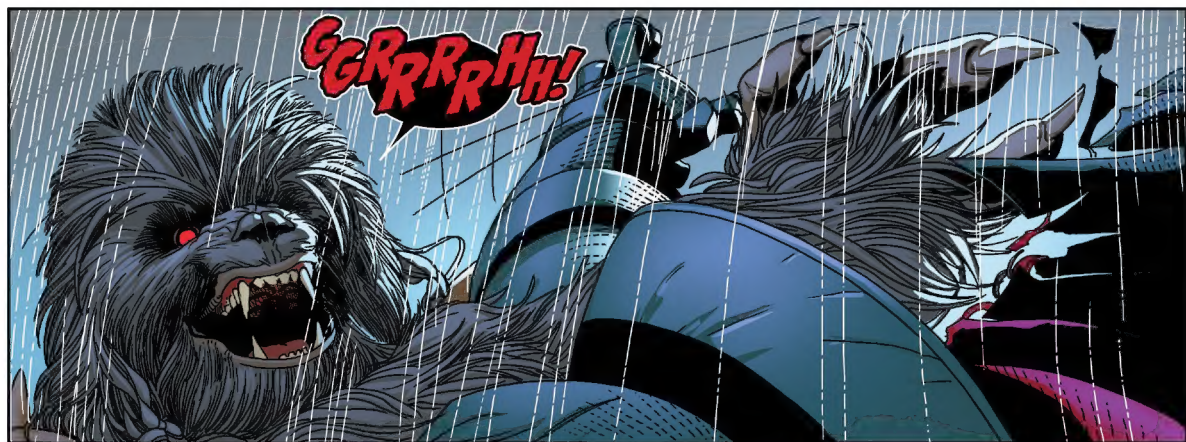
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THAT'S NOT
EXACTLY THE EMOTION
I'M FEELING, TRIPLE-
ZERO.

HEY, CREEPIO.
HOW DO WE STOP
THIS RABID SUPER-
WOOKIEE FROM
KILLING US?

OH, WE
DON'T.

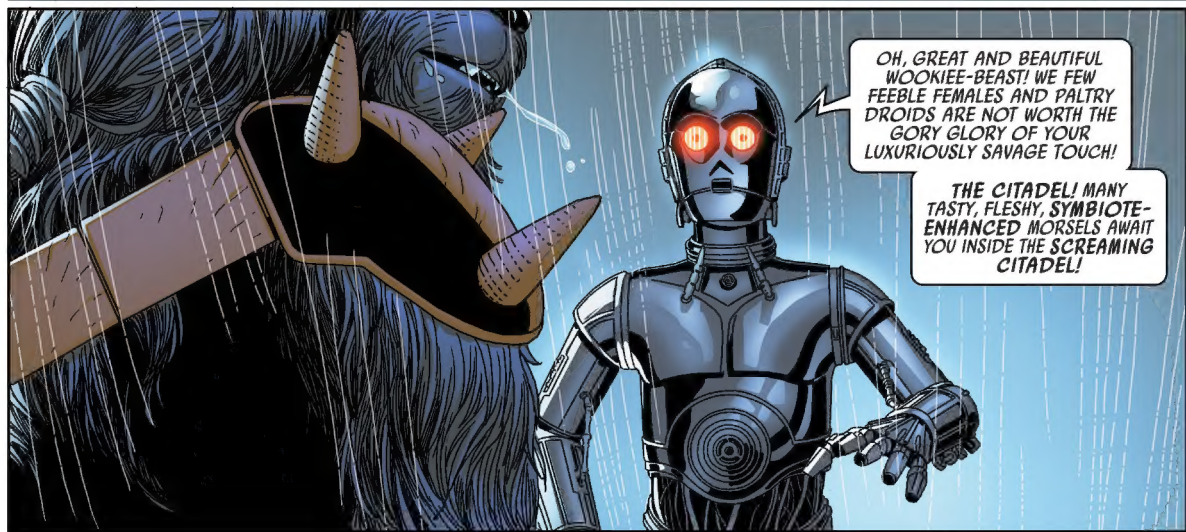


IF THE SYMBIOTE-INFECTED
BLACK KRRSANTAN SO CHOOSES,
HE COULD MURDER US ALL IN
QUITE A SPECTACULAR FASHION.

BLEEP!

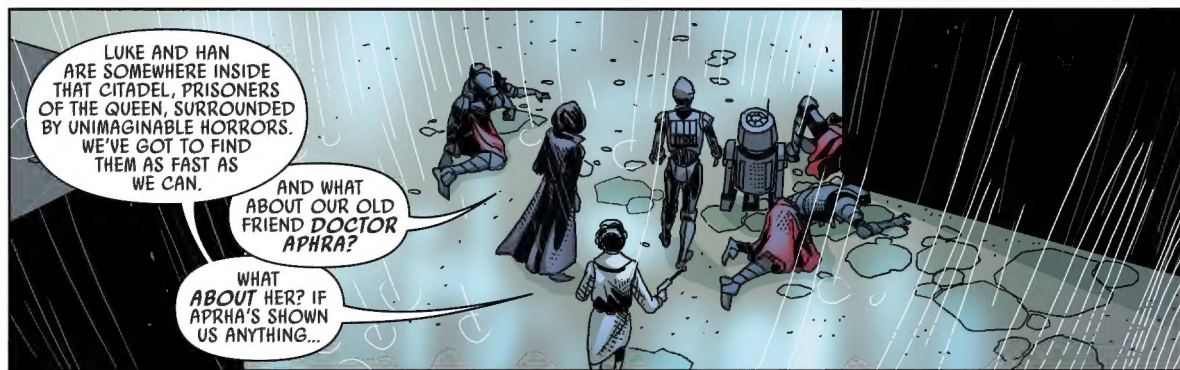
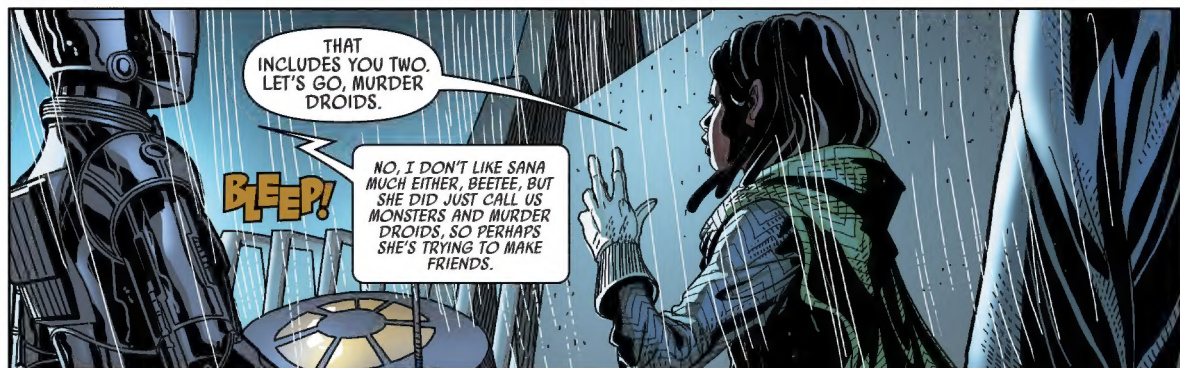
WELL NO, OF COURSE NOT YOU, BEETEE.
YOU ARE LIKE A DEATH STAR ON WHEELS.

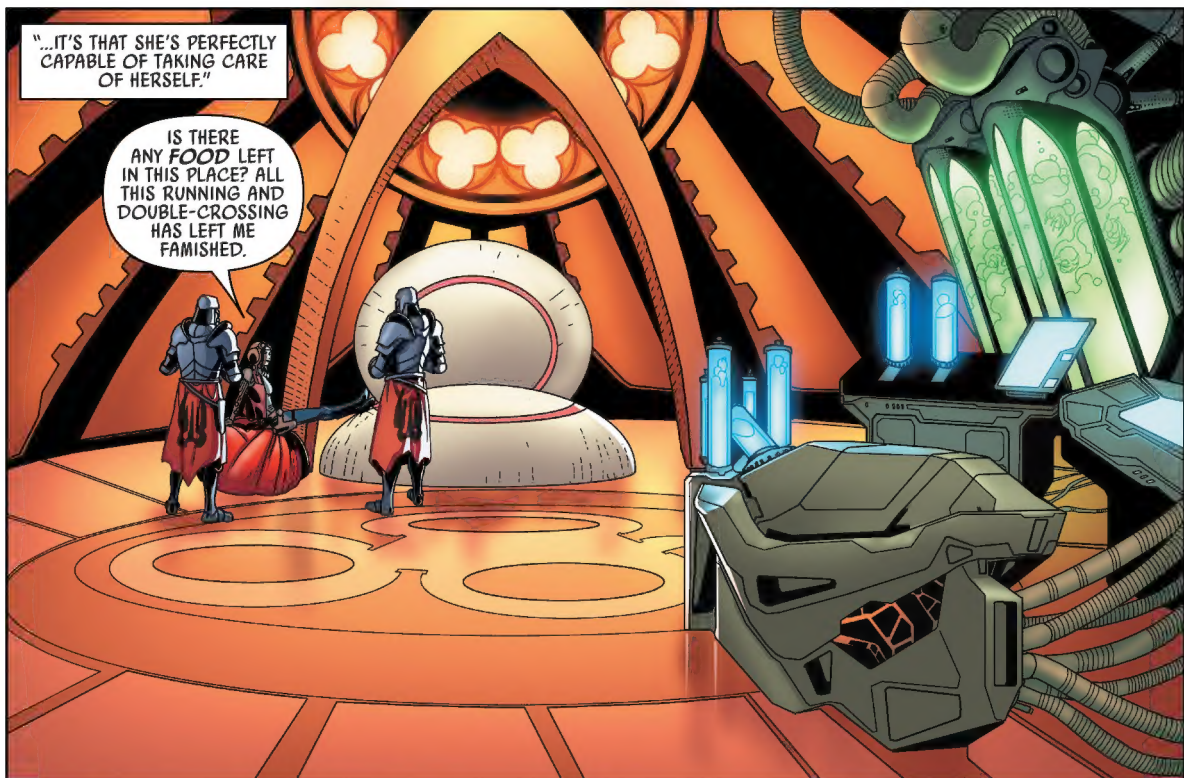
ALL WE CAN HOPE TO DO IS
POINT OUR FERAL FRIEND IN
A DIFFERENT DIRECTION.



OH, GREAT AND BEAUTIFUL
WOOKIEE-BEAST! WE FEW
FEEBLE FEMALES AND PALTRY
DROIDS ARE NOT WORTH THE
GORY GLORY OF YOUR
LUXURIOUSLY SAVAGE TOUCH!

THE CITADEL! MANY
TASTY, FLESHY, SYMBIOTE-
ENHANCED MORSELS AWAIT
YOU INSIDE THE SCREAMING
CITADEL!





"...IT'S THAT SHE'S PERFECTLY CAPABLE OF TAKING CARE OF HERSELF."

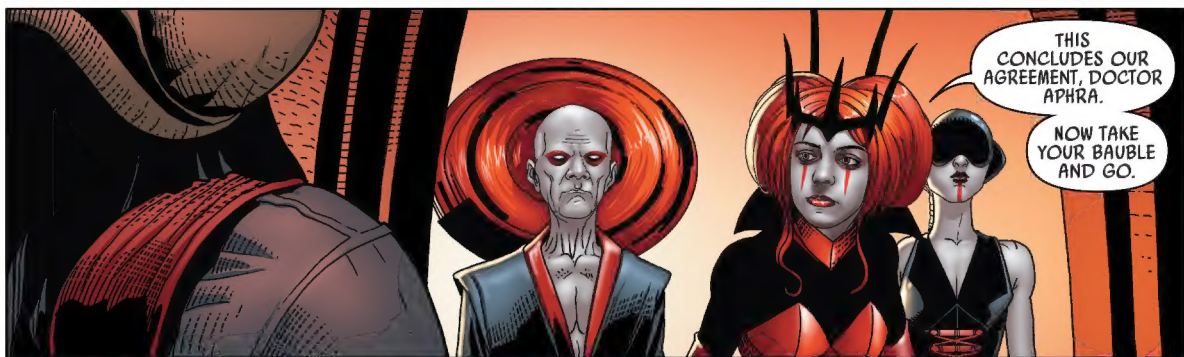
IS THERE ANY **FOOD** LEFT IN THIS PLACE? ALL THIS RUNNING AND DOUBLE-CROSSING HAS LEFT ME FAMISHED.



I MEAN, I KNOW I BLEW UP YOUR BREAKFAST TABLE AND ALL, BUT YOU **WERE** TRYING TO PUT A SYMBIOTE ON MY BRAIN TO MAKE ME A MINDLESS ZOMBIE SLAVE.

UH, NO OFFENSE, GUYS.

IT IS DONE.



THIS CONCLUDES OUR AGREEMENT, DOCTOR APHRA.

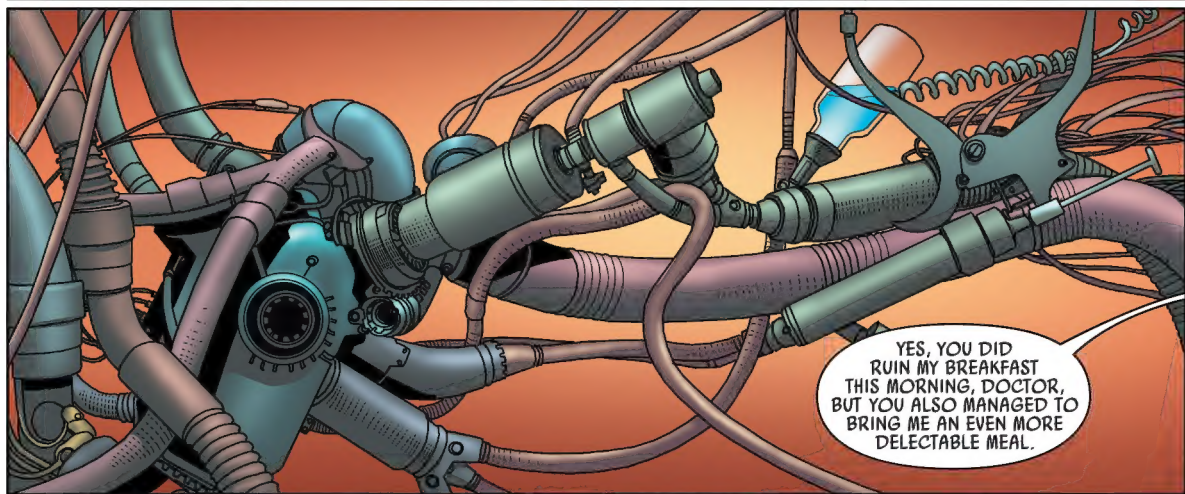
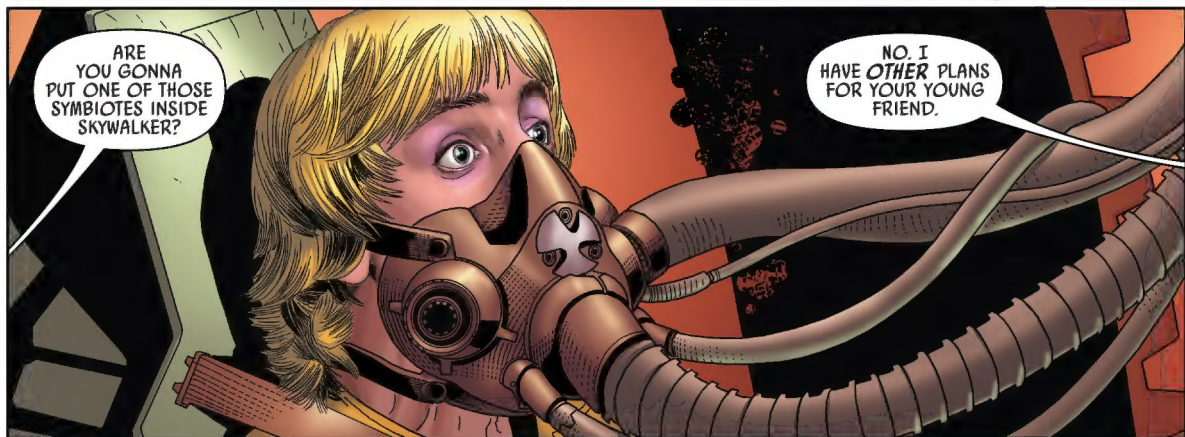
NOW TAKE YOUR BAUBLE AND GO.

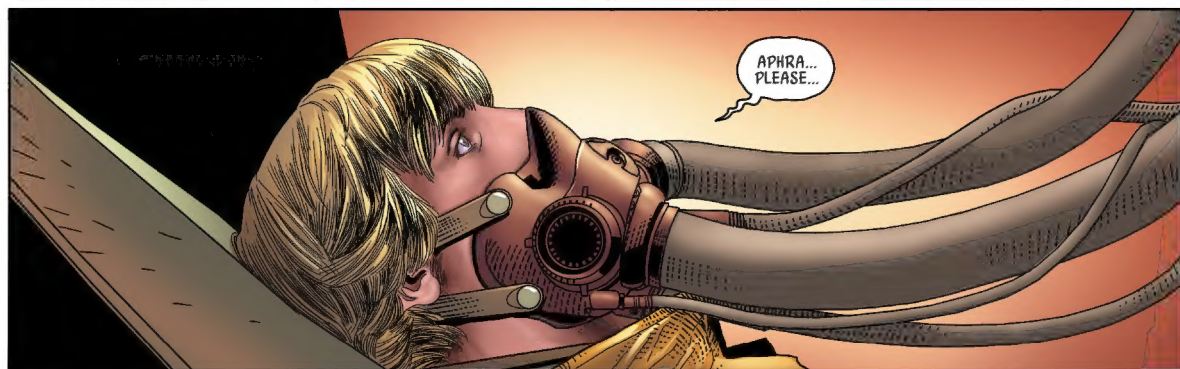


THE RUR CRYSTAL. SAFETY BASAL LEVEL **ACTIVATED!** I CAN WORK WITH THIS! HOW DID YOU...

THERE ARE MANY DARK SECRETS HIDDEN INSIDE THIS CITADEL, MY DEAR DOCTOR. IF YOU VALUE YOUR FLESH AND YOUR SANITY, I SUGGEST YOU REFRAIN FROM ASKING ANY MORE QUESTIONS.

HOW ABOUT JUST ONE MORE LITTLE ONE?

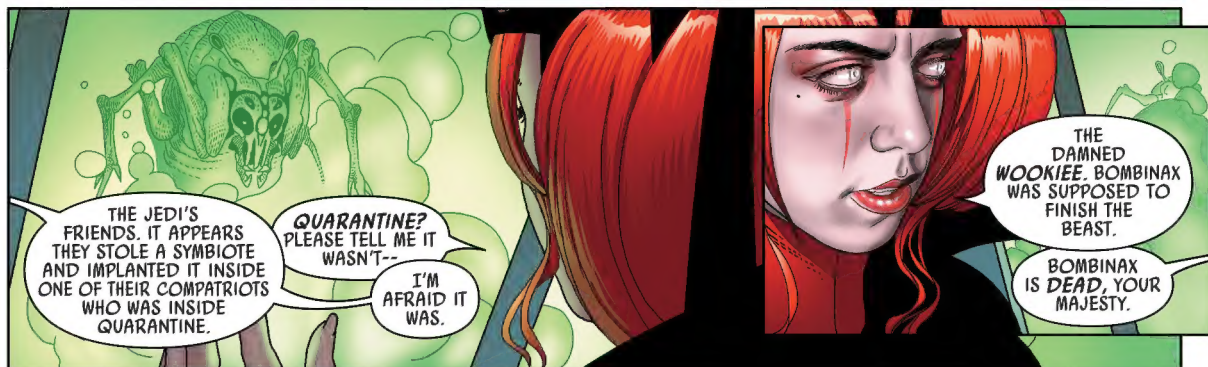






HAVE HER GUIDED THROUGH THE TUNNELS TO THE VILLAGE. AND SEE THAT WHATEVER SHIP SHE PROCURES DOES NOT MAKE IT OUT OF ORBIT.

YES, MY QUEEN. BUT I'M AFRAID WE HAVE ANOTHER PROBLEM.



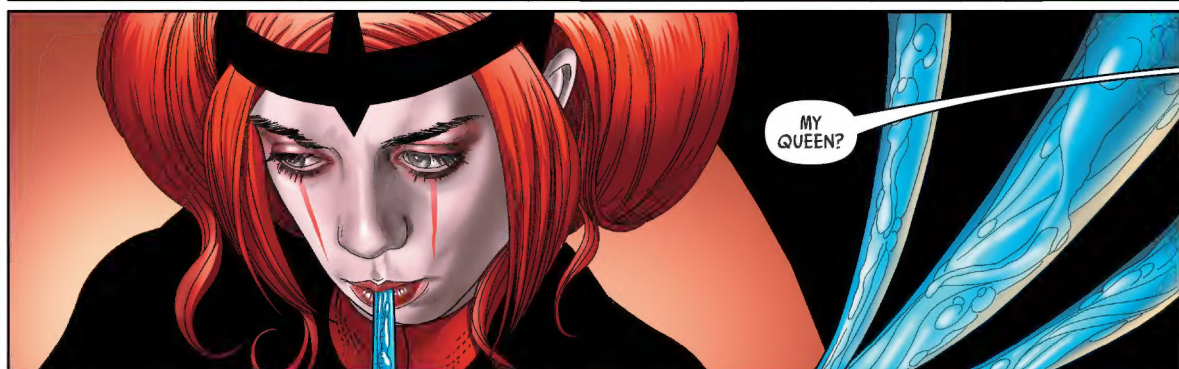
THE JEDI'S FRIENDS. IT APPEARS THEY STOLE A SYMBIOTE AND IMPLANTED IT INSIDE ONE OF THEIR COMPATRIOTS WHO WAS INSIDE QUARANTINE.

QUARANTINE? PLEASE TELL ME IT WASN'T--

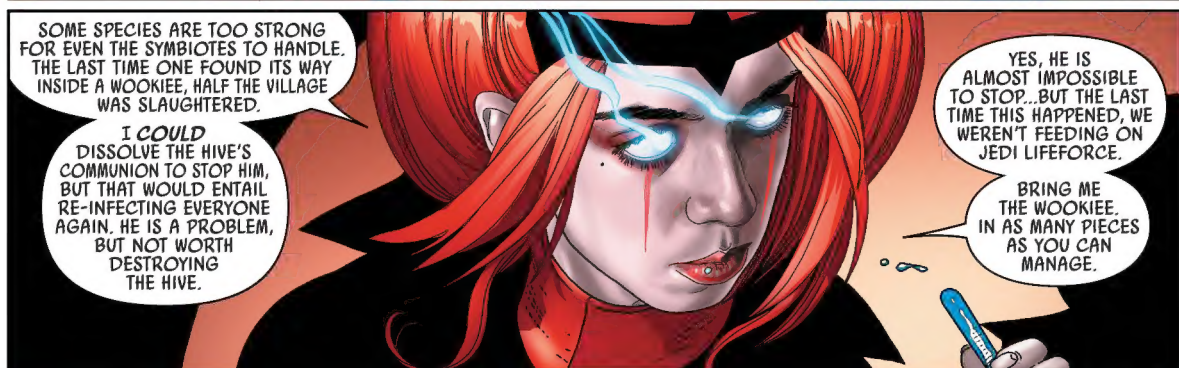
I'M AFRAID IT WAS.

THE DAMNED WOOKIEE. BOMBINAX WAS SUPPOSED TO FINISH THE BEAST.

BOMBINAX IS DEAD, YOUR MAJESTY.



MY QUEEN?

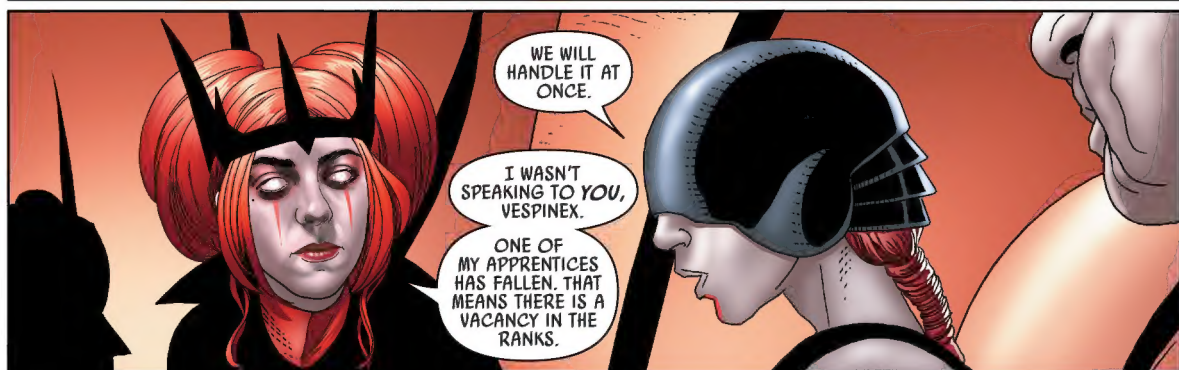


SOME SPECIES ARE TOO STRONG FOR EVEN THE SYMBIOTES TO HANDLE. THE LAST TIME ONE FOUND ITS WAY INSIDE A WOOKIEE, HALF THE VILLAGE WAS SLAUGHTERED.

I COULD DISSOLVE THE HIVE'S COMMUNION TO STOP HIM, BUT THAT WOULD ENTAIL RE-INFECTING EVERYONE AGAIN. HE IS A PROBLEM, BUT NOT WORTH DESTROYING THE HIVE.

YES, HE IS ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO STOP... BUT THE LAST TIME THIS HAPPENED, WE WEREN'T FEEDING ON JEDI LIFEFORCE.

BRING ME THE WOOKIEE. IN AS MANY PIECES AS YOU CAN MANAGE.



WE WILL HANDLE IT AT ONCE.

I WASN'T SPEAKING TO YOU, VESPINEX.

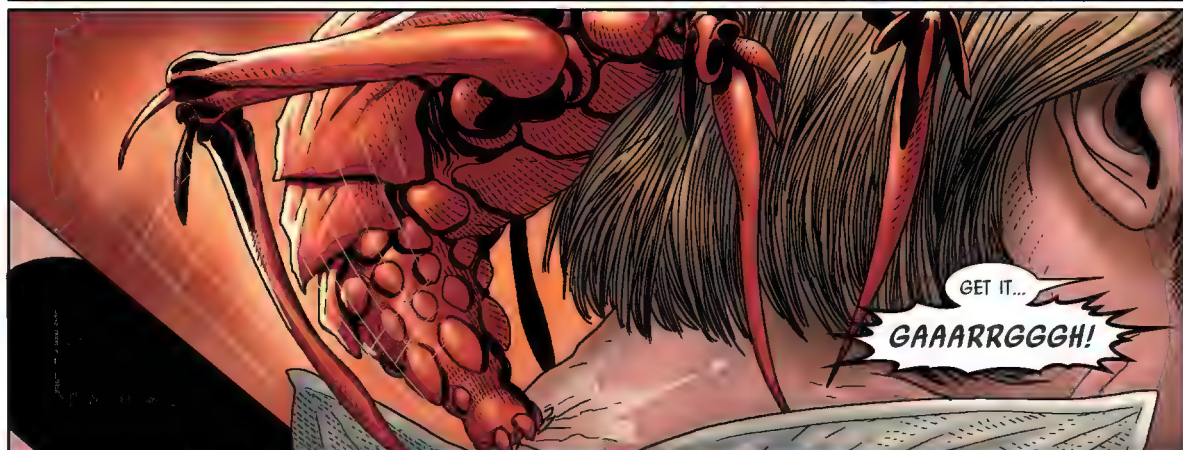
ONE OF MY APPRENTICES HAS FALLEN. THAT MEANS THERE IS A VACANCY IN THE RANKS.



ARE YOU PREPARED TO
FILL IT...CAPTAIN
SOLO?

WHAT IN THE
HELL IS THIS UGLY
LITTLE...

GAHH, GET
IT OFF!



GET IT...

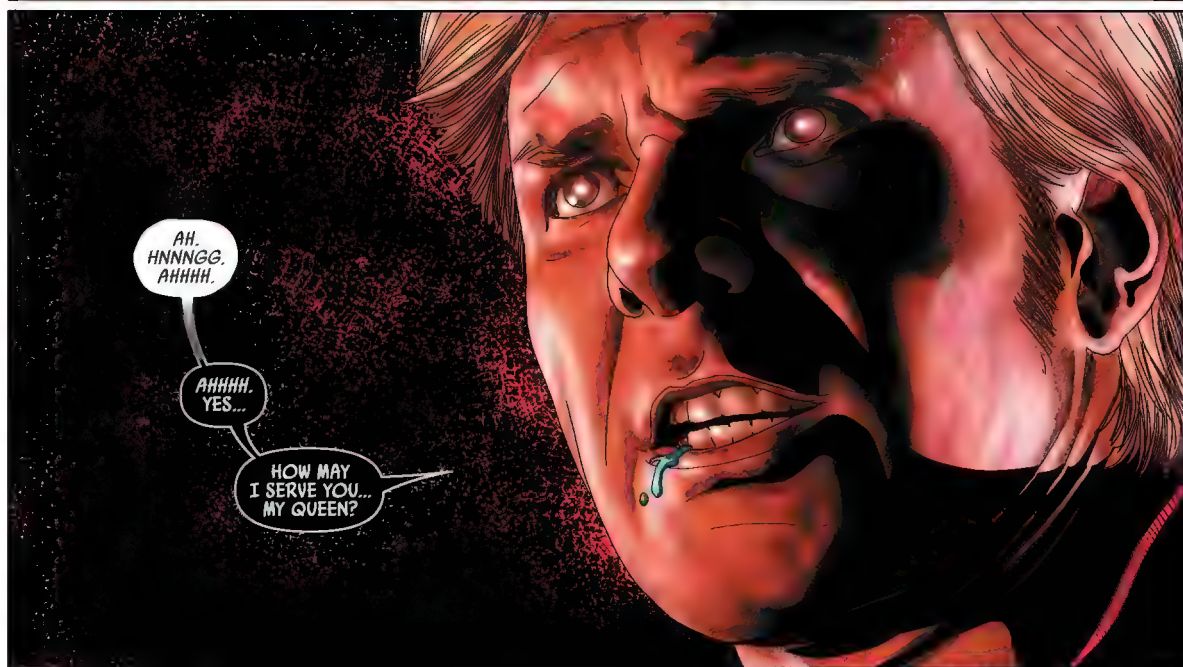
GAAARRGGGH!



DRINK,
SOLO.

AGGGH,
NO...=GLUG=
GARRGGGH!

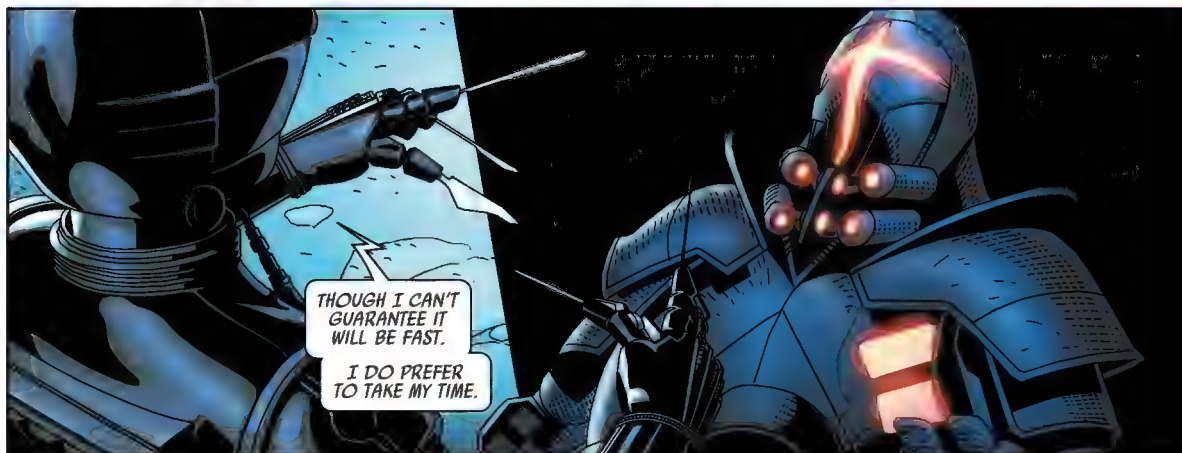
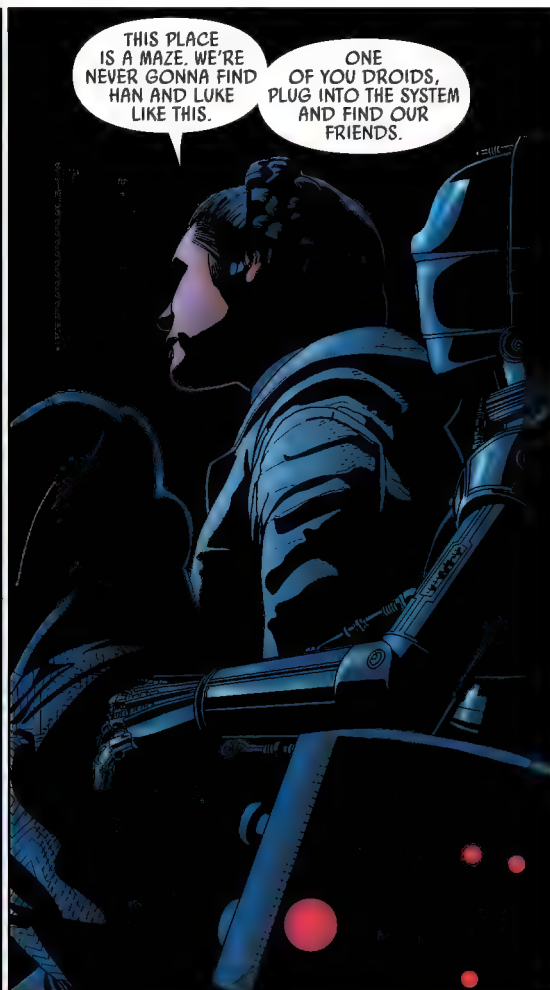
DRINK AND
BE REBORN.



AH.
HNNNGG.
AHHHH.

AHHHH.
YES...

HOW MAY
I SERVE YOU,
MY QUEEN?





AAH! HOW RUDE!



DESTROY THE DROIDS.

BRING THE WOMEN TO ME.



HAN?

AH, IT APPEARS I FOUND ONE.

OH, NO, HE'S BEEN INFECTED.



AND
WE'RE BEING
OVERWHELMED!
RUN!



MURDER
DROIDS! WHERE DID
THOSE STUPID--

GAGGGH!



HAN! STAY
BACK! DON'T
MAKE ME--!

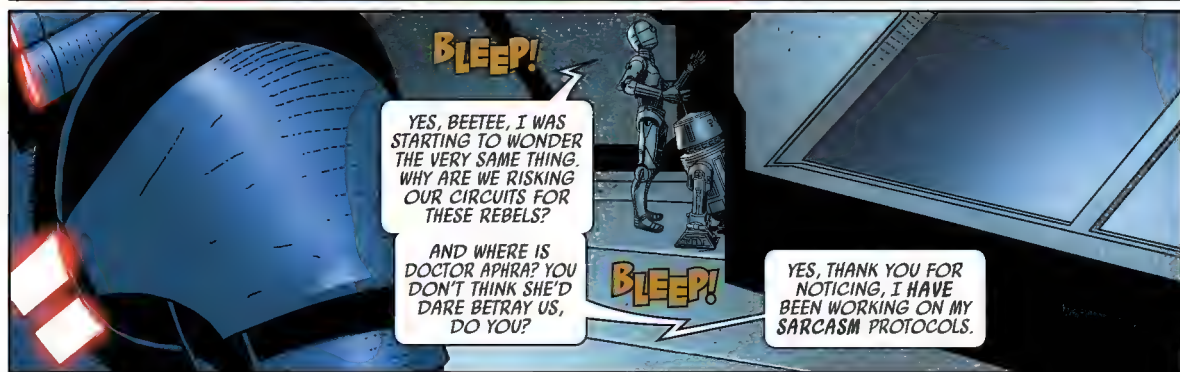
YOUR WAR
IS AT AN END,
PRINCESS.

NO MORE
REBELLION.
NO MORE
EMPIRE.



NO!

NOW
THERE IS ONLY
THE QUEEN.



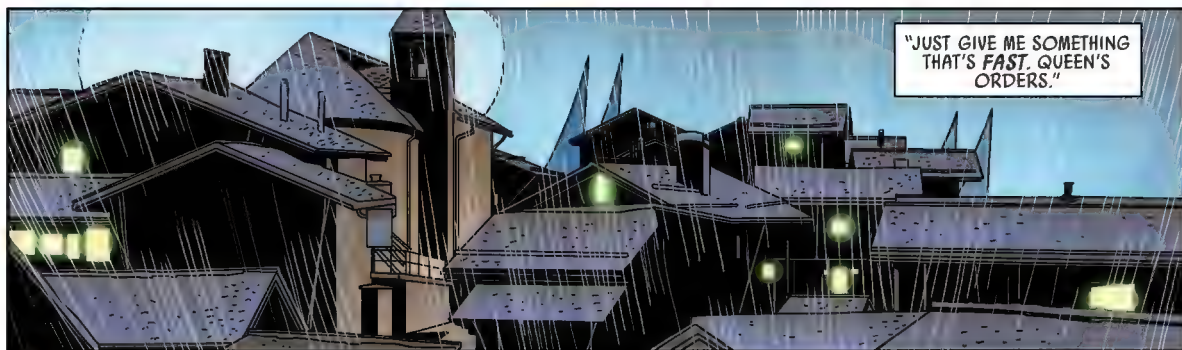
BLEEP!

YES, BEETEE, I WAS
STARTING TO WONDER
THE VERY SAME THING.
WHY ARE WE RISKING
OUR CIRCUITS FOR
THESE REBELS?

AND WHERE IS
DOCTOR APHRA? YOU
DON'T THINK SHE'D
DARE BETRAY US,
DO YOU?

BLEEP!

YES, THANK YOU FOR
NOTICING, I HAVE
BEEN WORKING ON MY
SARCASM PROTOCOLS.



"JUST GIVE ME SOMETHING
THAT'S *FAST*. QUEEN'S
ORDERS."



THE FASTEST
SHIP YOU'VE GOT ON
THIS BACKWOODS PLANET.
JUST DON'T EXPECT TO
EVER SEE IT
AGAIN.

OR ME.



NOT
SORRY I'M MISSING
WHATEVER'S MAKING
ALL THOSE SCREAMS COME
FROM THE SCREAMING
CITADEL.

NOPE.
NOT SORRY
AT ALL.

YOU
LIE.



I AM
RUR AND I SEE
THROUGH YOUR
VEIL OF LIES.

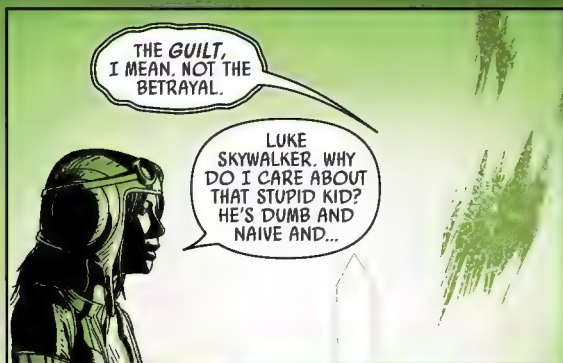
YOU ARE
FILLED WITH
REGRET.



YOU JUST WOKE UP AFTER THOUSANDS OF YEARS, RUR. YOU DON'T KNOW ME.

ALSO, YOU'RE A ROCK.

YOU BETRAYED SOMEONE. AND NOW YOU ARE WRACKED WITH GUILT. THIS IS AN UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE FOR YOU.



THE GUILT, I MEAN, NOT THE BETRAYAL.

LUKE SKYWALKER. WHY DO I CARE ABOUT THAT STUPID KID? HE'S DUMB AND NAIVE AND...



...AND EVERYTHING I'M NOT.

YOU'VE FACED TRAGEDY. IT MADE YOU WHAT YOU ARE.

YEAH.

BUT SO DID HIS.



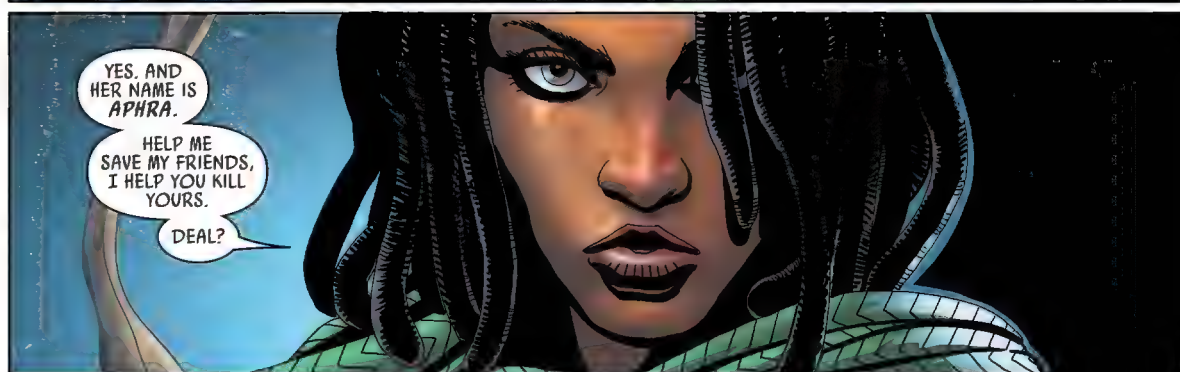
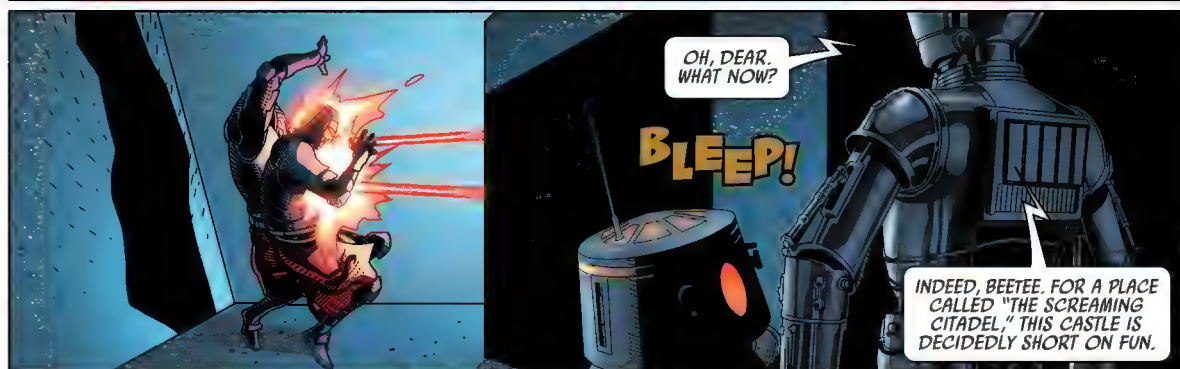
YOU ARE FEELING DEEPLY FRUSTRATED, MOSTLY WITH YOURSELF.

I WENT THROUGH A LOT OF TROUBLE TO ACTIVATE YOU. I SURE HOPE YOU PROVE MORE INSIGHTFUL THAN THIS.

NO MATTER WHAT YOU DO NEXT, YOU ARE UNLIKELY TO LEAVE THIS PLANET ALIVE.

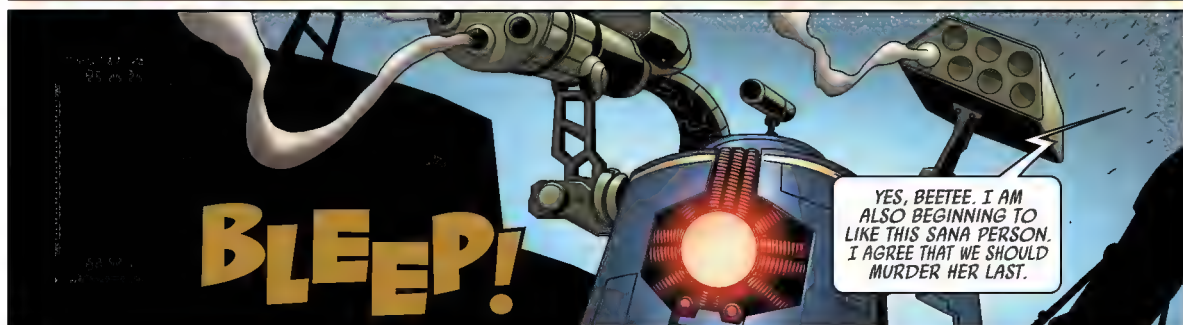
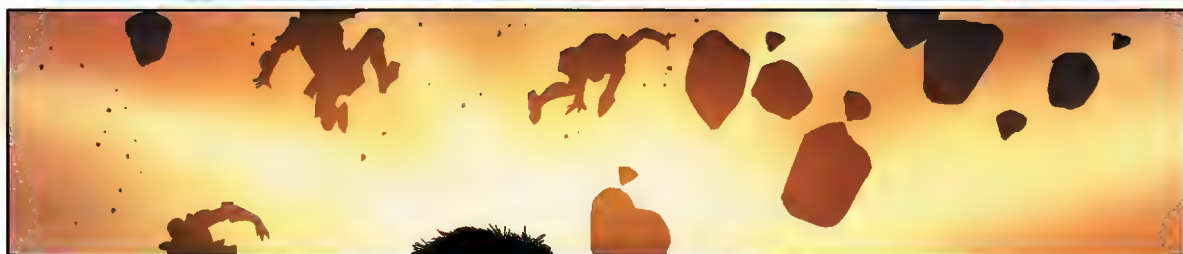
I'VE GOT NO FRIENDS LEFT, EXCEPT FOR A TALKING ROCK THAT LIKES TO STATE THE OBVIOUS. I AM ONE DAMN LUCKY DOCTOR.

THIS IS ALSO UNTRUE.

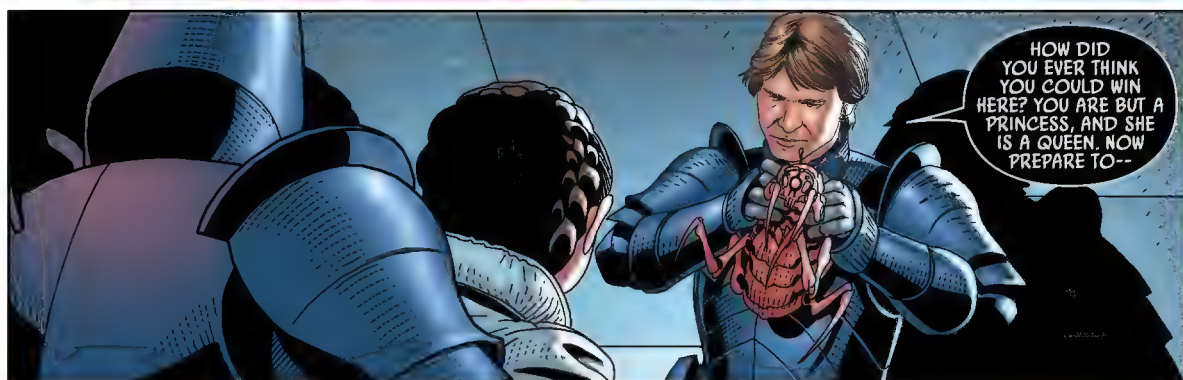




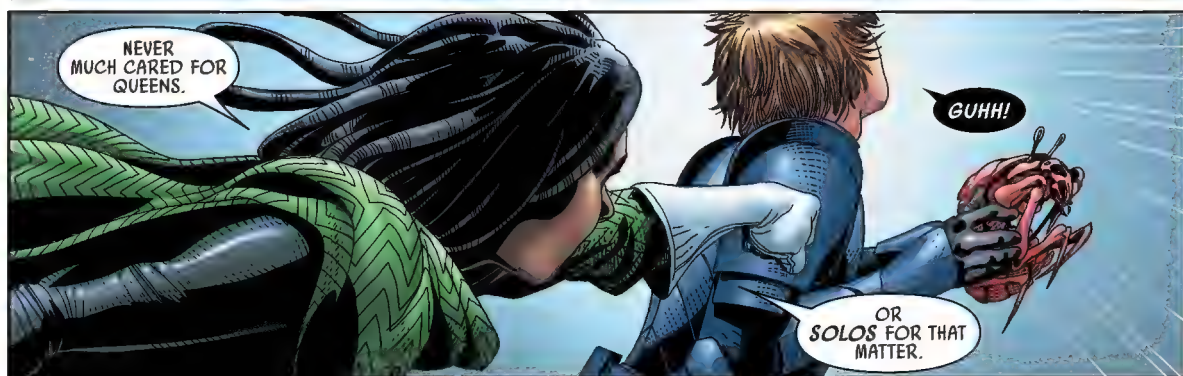
MORE
PLASMA SPEARS! WE
NEED MORE--



YES, BEETEE. I AM
ALSO BEGINNING TO
LIKE THIS SANA PERSON.
I AGREE THAT WE SHOULD
MURDER HER LAST.



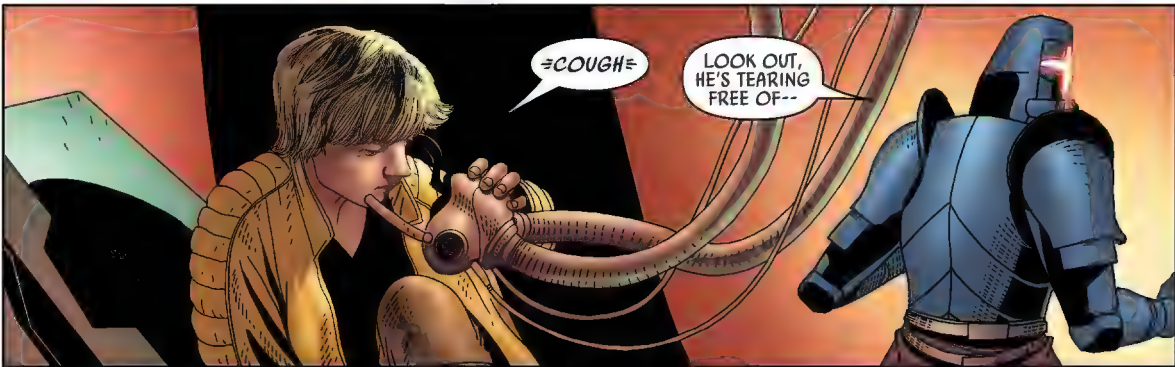
HOW DID
YOU EVER THINK
YOU COULD WIN
HERE? YOU ARE BUT A
PRINCESS, AND SHE
IS A QUEEN. NOW
PREPARE TO--



NEVER
MUCH CARED FOR
QUEENS.

GUHH!

OR
SOLOS FOR THAT
MATTER.



≡COUGH≡

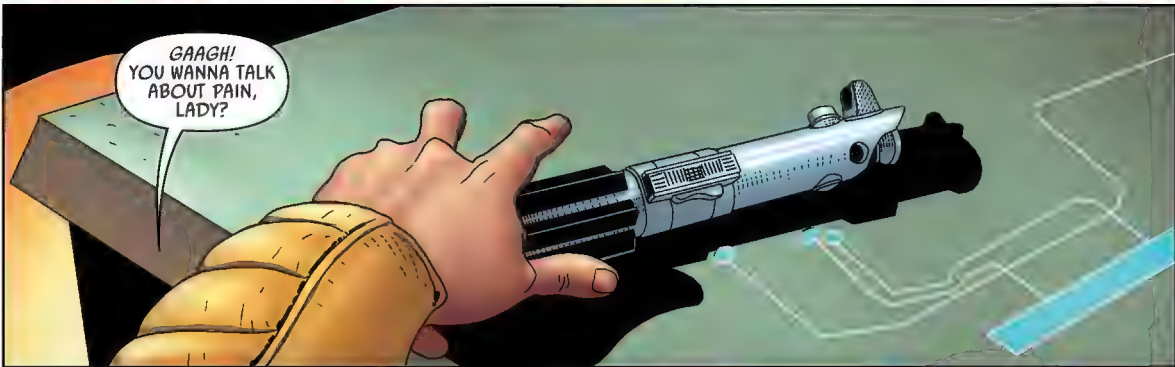
LOOK OUT,
HE'S TEARING
FREE OF--



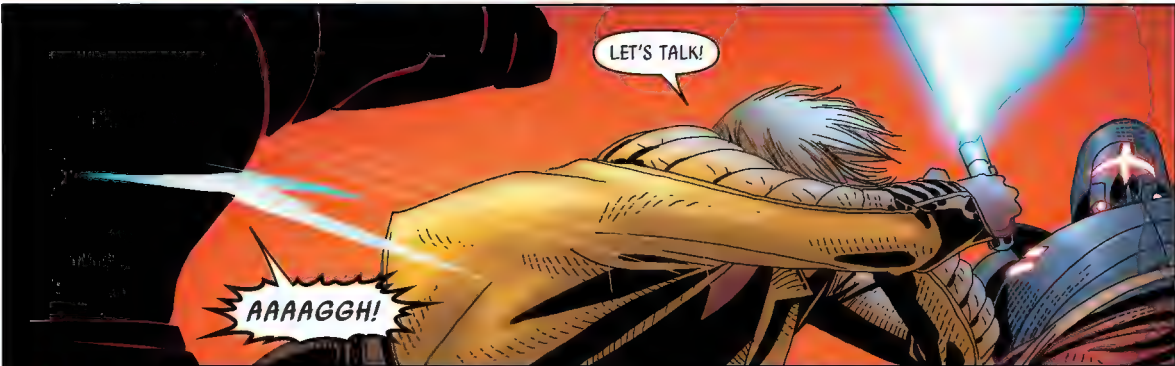
HHRRRRGH!

FASCINATING.
SUCH POWER.

STOP HIM!
BUT DAMAGE HIS FLESH, AND YOU
WILL KNOW HIS PAIN A THOUSANDFOLD!



GAAGH!
YOU WANNA TALK
ABOUT PAIN,
LADY?



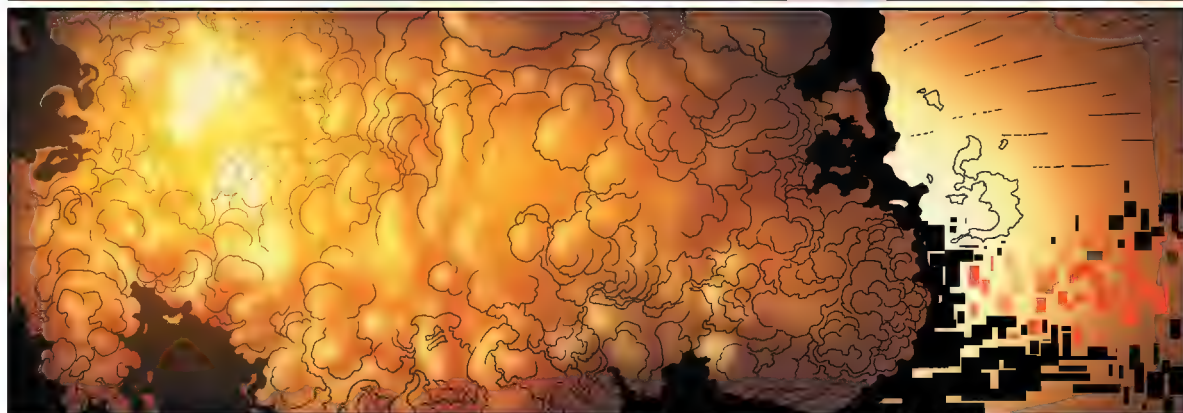
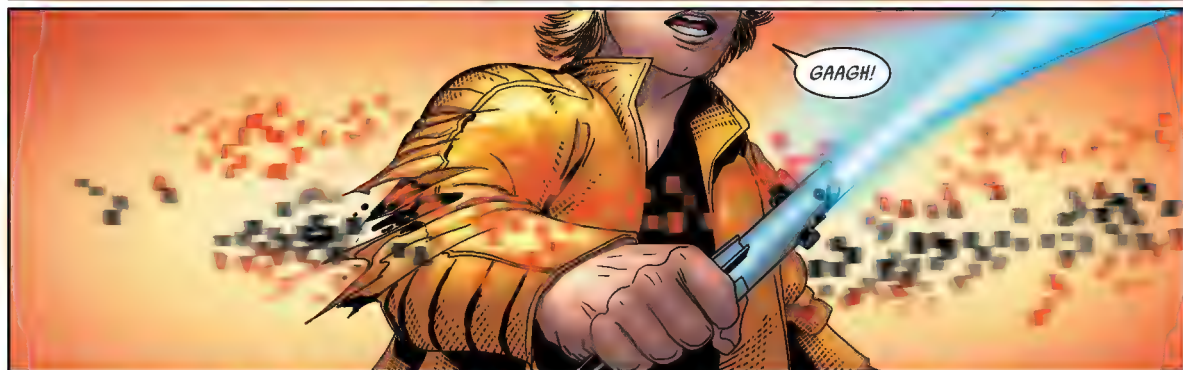
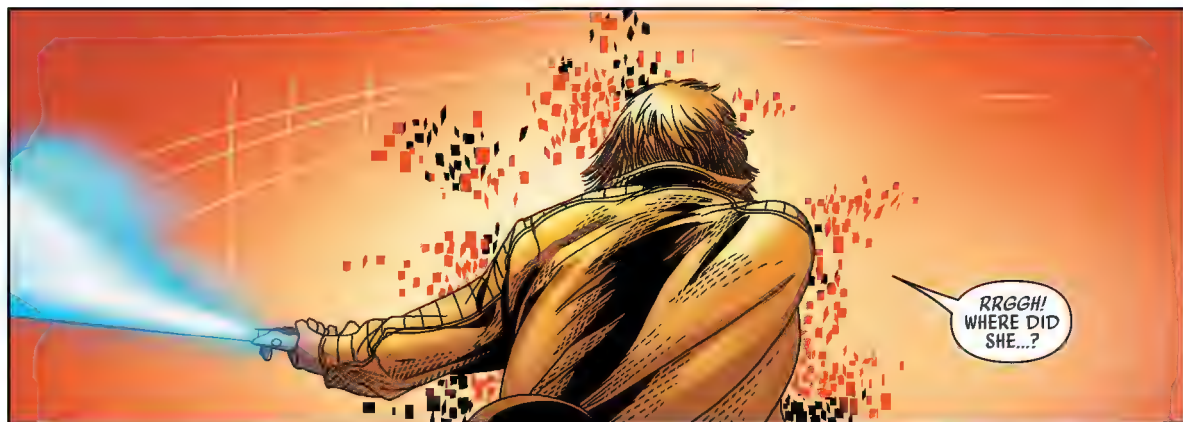
LET'S TALK!

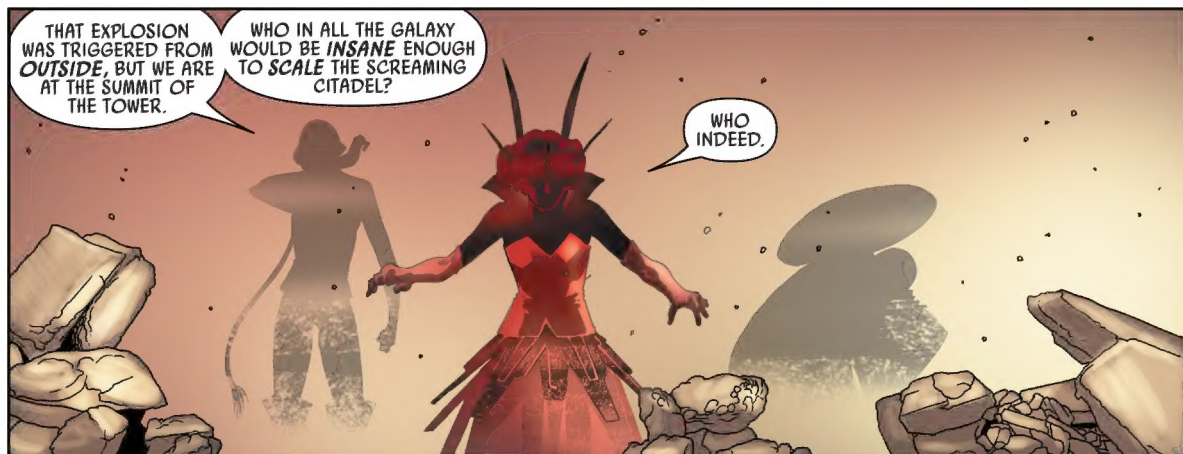
AAAAGGH!



VERY
WELL.

THOUGH
I DON'T EXPECT
YOU WILL ENJOY THE
CONVERSATION.





THAT EXPLOSION WAS TRIGGERED FROM *OUTSIDE*, BUT WE ARE AT THE SUMMIT OF THE TOWER.

WHO IN ALL THE GALAXY WOULD BE *INSANE* ENOUGH TO *SCALE* THE SCREAMING CITADEL?

WHO INDEED.



HEY, SORRY, THINK I LEFT SOMETHING HERE.

ANYBODY SEE A *FARM BOY* LYING AROUND?

YOU, YOU DARE GO BACK ON OUR BARGAIN.

BRING ME A SYMBIOTE.



YEAH. ABOUT THAT.

NO... WHAT DID YOU...

SEE, I FIGURED OUT WHY YOU DIDN'T WANNA PUT ONE INSIDE LUKE.



BECAUSE IN THE SYMBIOTE HIVE MIND, THE STRONGEST BEING SITS AT THE TOP OF THE FOOD CHAIN, RIGHT?

AAAAARRGGH!

NO.

AND I KNOW YOU'RE PRETTY IMPRESSIVE AND ALL, YOUR HIGHNESS. BUT GUESS WHAT?

THE FORCE
IS PRETTY STRONG
WITH THIS ONE.

**BOW...
BEFORE YOUR
KING.**



DOCTOR APHRA

NEXT ISSUE:



• Tour •
THE SEVEN SEAS

With

**BLACK MANTA
EMPIRE**



Call 555-FISH